GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4935
ANSWERED ON:26.04.2000
CLINTON`S PAK VISIT
RAGHUNANDAN LAL BHATIA

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government`s attention has been drawn to the press reports that various officials in Islamabad have claimed that President Clinton`s visit to Pakistan imparted legitimacy to the army take over;

(b) if so, the Government`s reaction thereto; and

(c) the extent to which Clinton`s visit to Pakistan is likely to solve the outstanding problems between India and Pakistan?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It is not for Government to comment on how the military regime in Pakistan interprets or portrays diplomatic contacts, including that with the United States. Government has noted that the US publicly stated on a number of occasions that President Clinton`s brief stopover in Islamabad was not an endorsement of the military Government and that normal relations with Pakistan are not possible until there is a restoration of normal, civilian, democratic rule.

(c) The Government has always been committed to resolving its differences with neighbours through peaceful bilateral dialogue in an atmosphere free from the threat of force and violence. Prime Minister and President Clinton agreed that problems between the countries of the region should be resolved peacefully by the concerned countries themselves. Abjuration of violence and acts of terror are required for facilitating a meaningful dialogue.